THE

SOURCE OF THE EVIL:

OR, THE

SYSTEM DISPLAYED.

ADDRESSED TO THE

GENTRY, YEOMANRY, FREEHOLDERS, AND ELECTORS OF ENGLAND.

BY A FREEHOLDER.

LETTER IV.

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THE

SOURCE OF THE EVIL, &c.

LETTER IV.

Friends and Countrymen,

IN my three former Letters, I endeavoured to trace out to you the progreſs of that fatal ſyſtem to which every friend of his country, who has been at all engaged in the public ſervice, has, at one time or other, in the courſe of the preſent reign, found cauſe to attribute all our calamities, foreign and domeſtic. I obſerved to you, at my firſt outſet, that this would be neceſſary, in order that you might come fairly and fully prepared to diſcuſs the queſtions which I engaged myſelf to prove to you to be the *real queſtions* now agitating between the Crown and the Houſe of Commons; that is, between the Crown and You.

While I have been proſecuting this deſign, laudable I hope, in itſelf, and certainly well meant, the Miniſters of the Crown have taken care to give ample proofs of the charges I have brought againſt them. Every hour within the laſt three weeks has been marked by ſome freſh attempt to ſhake the foundations of the Conſtitution. What was one day ſuſpicion, the next day became certainty; and I

might only refer you to their own aſſertions, and to what is, if poſſible, ſtill leſs equivocal—their own conduct—to convince you how fully I was warranted to ſtate thoſe queſtions to you in the manner in which I ſtated them in my Firſt Letter. *The Cabal has already triumphed over the Houſe of Commons. The only appeal left for the friends of the Conſtitution is to You.* If they find you wanting to yourſelves, they may lament over your degeneracy, but they muſt ſink under its conſequences.

The firſt queſtion I propoſed to you was, "If you were "willing that the rules and maxims of arbitrary govern"ments in the appointment of the Miniſters of the Crown "ſhould be adopted and put in practice in the place of "thoſe which have prevailed ſince the Revolution, and "which agree with the ſpirit of the Conſtitution as ſettled "at that period?"

In *arbitrary governments*, the *will* of the Sovereign is the *ſole rule* of the ſubject. To that *will* the people muſt pay *implicit obedience* in all caſes whatever. The King *makes* the law, and the King provides for the *execution* of it, without the leaſt reference to any power in the State diſtinct from himſelf, or without being *obliged* to conſult any other inclinations or intereſts than his own. Hence in the choice of his *Miniſters* or executive ſervants, as well as in every other exerciſe of Regal power, an arbitrary unlimited monarch need look for no other merit or qualification, but an implicit deference to his pleaſure, and a ſervile acquieſcence in all his deſires. If the candidates for office have the talents to take advantage of his weakneſs, to humour his prejudices, to gratify his reſentments, to become pliable and ready inſtruments in accompliſhing his deſigns, and to manage with dexterity the ſecret intrigues of his Court, they require no other recommendation. He rules over *willing ſlaves*, and he gives them what taſk-maſter he pleaſes. Whether that taſk-maſter be a perſon whom the ſlaves like or diſlike, is a queſtion, the privilege of entering into which they

they have forfeited. They may *grumble*, but they *muſt ſubmit*. This is the caſe with your neighbours in France; it is the caſe with the people in Spain, and all the other monarchies of the world, if you except your own.

For *you* your anceſtors provided a happier lot; to them you owe the peculiar privilege of being bound by no laws but thoſe of your own making: and though, for wiſe purpoſes, they decreed, that the execution of thoſe laws ſhould be entruſted to the ſupreme Magiſtrate, whom they conſented to appoint for that purpoſe; yet the *ſpirit* of that privilege requires that the perſons by whom this Magiſtrate exerciſes that truſt, ſhould be ſuch as deſerve and enjoy the confidence of the perſons whom you have choſen to act for you as a branch of the State. It is a maxim in *your* Conſtitution, that your King *cannot violate the law*. In framing it he has no greater ſhare than you have; he cannot aboliſh, —he cannot alter, or even ſuſpend it without your conſent, *given by your Repreſentatives*—It therefore follows, in the natural courſe of things, that in the diſcharge of a truſt, which was only given for *your good*, and in providing for the execution of what *could not be eſtabliſhed without the conſent of your Repreſentatives*, they who come recommended by the approbation and confidence of thoſe Repreſentatives, ſhould be preferred to *private favourites*, to men who have only the liking of their maſter, or the intrigues, and dangerous policy of his Court to recommend them; who profeſs to ſeparate his intereſt and make them diſtinct from the intereſts of your Repreſentatives, and who accept this employment profeſſedly with a view to eſtabliſh the former on the ruins the latter.

Whatever ſpeculative men may have dreamt on the ſubject, the only quarter from which a free people, like you, can dread the deſtruction of your liberties, is from the powers of the prerogative veſted in the Crown, uſurping over the privileges of your Repreſentatives. Hence it has been provided, that thoſe powers ſhould always be exerciſed

ciſed by the Miniſtry of perſons diſtinct from the Crown, but of its appointment. For as the King *can do no wrong*, that is to ſay, as he is not *accountable* for any wrong that is done, the ſubject would have no remedy, if care was not taken that there ſhould be ſome intermediate perſons who ſhould be anſwerable to the Repreſentatives of the People for *every act* of the prerogative, *throughout all its branches*. The ſureſt pledge, therefore, that you can have of ſuch an uſurpation, as I have alluded to, being never attempted, is to have the powers of the prerogative always managed by men in whom your Repreſentatives can confide, and who are known to them to have no intereſt diſtinct from yours.

This was the ſpirit that prevailed, and theſe the maxims that were profeſſed and eſtabliſhed at ſeveral periods of our hiſtory, but particularly at the Revolution, and which continued to be cheriſhed and practiſed without interruption during the ſubſequent reigns. The executive powers, entruſted to the Sovereign, the diſcretionary uſe of which conſtitutes what is called the *prerogative*, were exerciſed invariably ſince that period on popular grounds, and not on a ſyſtem of Court intrigue;—on public principles, and not from the prejudices of private favouritiſm: in the true ſpirit of a popular Government, and in the moſt perfect harmony with that branch of the legiſlature, in which the popular power reſides, and not in the corrupt ſupport of a power diſtinct from the People.

Confining ourſelves, for example, to the two Kings of the Brunſwick line, there is not a ſingle inſtance to be found, in the hiſtory of their reigns, of an Adminiſtration continuing to poſſeſs the confidence of the Sovereign, after it had ceaſed to poſſeſs the confidence of your Repreſentatives. Generous and grateful, theſe Princes well knew the ſpirit of the people over whom they were choſen to reign, and they reverenced it.—Wiſe and juſt, they knew the tenure on which they were raiſed to the Throne by the Act of Settlement, and, ſo far from thinking it a degradation,

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they placed their glory in complying with the conditions on which they were called to rule over a free people by their free choice. The prerogative reſerved to them, of naming their own Miniſters, they conſidered to conſiſt, as well as every other part of their prerogative, in the diſcretionary power of *acting for the good of their people*; and they concluded, that whenever they exerciſed that power in oppoſition to the avowed ſenſe of the Repreſentatives of the People, ſuch exerciſe, however it might be defended on *legal grounds*, and on the plea of *extreme right*, was an abuſe of their prerogative.

What a ſubverſion of theſe maxims have we lived to ſee? How different is the ſpirit of our times! Look to the preſent Adminiſtration—attend to their formation—to their continuance in office—to their doctrines and conduct, and judge for yourſelves. Were they called into office becauſe they were known to poſſeſs the confidence of your Repreſentatives? The very reverſe. If the confidence of your Repreſentatives was a certain recommendation to the confidence of the Throne, as it invariably had been from the acceſſion to the preſent reign, would the preſent Miniſters have ſupplanted the laſt? The laſt Miniſters poſſeſſed that confidence in the moſt eminent degree, and for that very reaſon they were removed; and at the very inſtant when it appeared that they poſſeſſed it the higheſt; and when, from that appearance, they began to give the nation hopes of ſeeing, at length, a ſtable and permanent Adminiſtration, ſuch as can alone conduct the great and arduous taſk of Government at a moment like this. But the *Royal Will and Pleaſure*, that univerſal leveller in arbitrary Courts, that ſole rule of conduct to an unlimited King, at firſt conveyed to the agents of the Cabal, in whiſpers and private cloſetings, and then daringly publiſhed to the great Lords and Officers of the Court, who owe their titles and their dignities, and the emoluments of their places, to the *perſonal* favour of the Sovereign, without any connection with your parti-

particular intereſt, or any dependence on you, was ſet in oppoſition to the favour and confidence, and ſupport of your branch of the Legiſlature; and, to the triumph of that Oppoſition, were the laſt *uncomplying*, and therefore *odious* Miniſters, indebted for their diſmiſſal from the Royal Councils, and the *preſent favourite ſervants of the Crown*, as they affect to call themſelves, for their introduction into office!

Let us next ſee to what theſe *favourite ſervants of the Crown* were indebted for their *continuance* in office? Was it to the confidence and ſupport of your Repreſentatives? The very reverſe. That confidence followed the diſtinguiſhed characters whom they had ſupplanted. All the arts of corruption, all the blandiſhments, and ſeducing offers of the Court, all the denunciations of royal vengeance, and even the threats of diſſolution, were not able to weaken that confidence, or to divert or transfer that ſupport. This was avowed in repeated Reſolutions, reſpectfully laid at the foot of the Throne. It was repeatedly declared in Addreſſes, preſented by the whole Houſe to the Sovereign in perſon. But what was the reſult? An increaſe of obſtinate and daring reſiſtance on the part of the adviſers of the Crown;—a confirmation of their reſolution to maintain their places by the ſame expedients, and on the ſame grounds, as thoſe by which they got poſſeſſion of them—An avowed determination to fight the battle out between the abettors of arbitrary power and the aſſertors of the rights of the people, and, as a deciſion of the conteſt, to brave the ſenſe of the Commons of England, to ſet all their cenſures at defiance, to trample on their dignity, and deſpiſe their authority; to ſhow the world that their confidence or their diſtruſt, their concurrence or their oppoſition, are equally indifferent to the Miniſters of the Crown; and that the ſupport of the prerogative alone, exerting its influence over all its own creatures, and in that branch of the legiſlature, the members of which are of its own appointment, and whoſe numbers

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it can increaſe at pleaſure, and whoſe pride of honours and of diſtinctions naturally attach them to the ſource of all diſtinctions and honours, is the only ſupport neceſſary for thoſe to whom the King chuſes to intruſt the government of this country, Such has been the ſpirit, and ſuch the conduct of the preſent Adminiſtration. Judge then if my ſtatement of the firſt queſtion propoſed to you was not a fair ſtatement, and determine for yourſelves.

The ſecond queſtion I propoſed to you, as containing the real point at iſſue between the Crown and you, was, whether you "were willing to relinquiſh that controul over the "King's Miniſters, which is your inherent right, and to "releaſe them from the reſponſibility which they owe to "your Repreſentatives for all their meaſures?"

To each of the three branches which compoſe the Government of this country, are annexed certain diſtinct and ſeperate privileges. In the free and independent uſe of theſe privileges conſiſts that check which each branch poſſeſſes over the other, and which forms the ſuperior excellence of the Engliſh Conſtitution. For inſtance, in the point immediately under our conſideration, the King has the excluſive privilege of chuſing and electing to all executive offices. The People have a *check*, or *negative*, on this privilege, in a refuſal, on the part of their Repreſentatives, to ſupport the perſons ſo choſen and elected, if they cannot confide in them. This check, or negative, or controul, has been invariably exerciſed, whenever the occaſion called for it, and there are three ways in which it has been exerciſed—By refuſing the ſupplies; by impeachment; or by adviſing and addreſſing the King—But from the continuance of the preſent Adminiſtration in office, all theſe means are ſhown to be ineffectual; and if the precedent be eſtabliſhed and the attempt proved finally ſucceſsful, there is an end at once to the Conſtitution. The government of this country ſtands, from that moment, on principles totally different

from thoſe by which we hitherto held the Charters of our Rights.

As to the *Supplies*, ſuch are the circumſtances of the times that to withhold them, might not only materially affect, but even totally deſtroy the public credit. The faith of the nation is pledged for the payment of the intereſt of the national debt; and to refuſe the funds, appropriated for the purpoſe, would be to break that faith. It might not be much leſs dangerous to withhold the Supplies for the ordinary ſervices of the current year. It might lead to general confuſion, and diſ-arrange the whole ſyſtem of official government. Of theſe circumſtances Mr. Pitt has availed himſelf to the worſt of purpoſes. He brought them home to the feelings of the friends of your country, and giving them the choice either of running a riſk of plunging the nation into confuſion and ruin, or of endangering the Conſtitution, dared and defied your Repreſentatives to make uſe of this check and controul, veſted in them for the preſervation of your liberties.

With equal inſolence and triumph, he dared them to exerciſe the right of *impeachment*. He knew how nugatory the exerciſe of that right would prove in his caſe. Your Repreſentatives may *impeach*, but the Houſe of Lords are to be the *Judges*: that is to ſay, the cauſe between the Repreſentatives of the People of England, and the corrupt and evil adviſers of the Crown, is to be tried by the avowed ſupporters and abettors of thoſe adviſers. Great Juſtice and ample redreſs you have to expect from a Court, without the aid and countenance of whoſe members the party accuſed never could have been enabled to commit the offences for which they ſhould be called to its Bar! What puniſhment, think you, would the Houſe of Lords that rejected the Excluſion Bill, in the infamous reign of Charles the Second, after it had paſſed the Houſe of Commons, with pretty much the ſame majority that ſupported Mr. Fox's

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East-India Bill, have inflicted on the adviſers of the Popiſh ſucceſſion, if the virtuous Ruſſel, or the patriotic Lord Cavendiſh, had proceeded to impeach them? This is the only inſtance I can find in our hiſtory applicable to the preſent queſtion; and it is only by ſuch Miniſters as then adviſed the Crown, and with ſuch a Houſe of Lords as in thoſe profligate and unprincipled days, hired themſelves out to the arbitrary views of thoſe Miniſters, that the right of impeachment for encroachments on the public freedom could have been rendered nugatory.

The expedient of adviſing and addreſſing the King only remained, and to this your Repreſentatives had recourſe. They were willing to perſuade themſelves that they ſhould find the ſame attention paid to their wiſhes, and the ſame condeſcenſion to their jealouſies and fears, which had ever been ſhown to your Repreſentatives by the Princes of the Houſe of Brunſwick. Their temper, their moderation, the calm and deliberate manner in which they conducted this important buſineſs, was ſuch as became the great and dignified object they had in view. The Reſolutions, which they had inſerted in their Journals, expreſſing their want of confidence in the preſent Adminiſtration, and the ruinous conſequences that muſt reſult from their remaining in office to the principles of the Conſtitution, and to the intereſt of the State, they ordered reſpectfully to be laid before the Throne. But what was the reſult? A contemptuous ſilence of more than a week on the ſubject, was only broken by a more contemptuous anſwer. The haughty Miniſter could ſcarce deſcend ſo far from his dignity, as to tell your Repreſentatives that the King "had ſeen their Reſolutions, but that he had not "diſmiſſed his Miniſters, nor had they reſigned."

Notwithſtanding this anſwer, which ſtands unparalelled in the Engliſh annals, ſince the days when the unhappy Charles attoned by his death for the arbitrary Counſels of his Miniſters, and their inſulting treatment of his Parlia-

ment, no paſſion, no reſentment biaſſed the public deliberations. The Commons, indeed, determined no longer to ſubmit your dignity to the perſonal petulance of a hot-headed young man. They voted an addreſs of the ſame import with their Reſolutions, and they carried it in a body to the Throne, that they might hear their fate from the mouth of their Sovereign. But with what different impreſſions muſt they have returned from the Royal Preſence on that day, from thoſe with which they approached it? They found that their gracious Sovereign had been adviſed to confirm and countenance from the Throne, the deſigns of the Miniſter: they heard the cauſe of that Miniſter, pleaded there againſt the cenſures of the Houſe; they found that to ſerve his purpoſes, and to ſecure him in power, a line of ſeperation was drawn between them, and their Conſtituents by the ſupreme Magiſtrate, and all the weight and conſequence veſted in them by the Conſtitution, declared from the higheſt authority to reſide elſewhere; in the looſe, partial, and prejudiced addreſſes of a few corporate towns, Addreſſes procured, as you very well know, by the influence of the poſſeſſors of the ſeveral boroughs, aſſiſted by trick, and artifice, and impoſition, and which the worſt of Miniſters have procured in the worſt of times. This line of ſeparation, it has been the object and ſtudy of the Cabal to draw, ſince the firſt broaching of their ſyſtem; but the public and authoritative ſanction of the Crown to the deſign was reſerved for the counſels of Mr. Pitt.

It was not poſſible for your Repreſentatives not to have recalled to their minds the unhappy days, when ſuch a language and ſuch doctrines were laſt recommended to be held from that Throne. It was impoſſible for them not to have recollected, that it was exactly on ſimilar pretences that the Miniſters of the ſtubborn and infatuated Stuarts grounded the contempt with which they treated the Petitions and Addreſſes of the Houſe of Commons, praying to

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be relieved from their arbitrary Counſels. Yet they reſumed their deliberations with a temper and moderation that could only be equalled by their fixed and firm determination to aſſert and vindicate your rights againſt the encroachments, to which they were expoſed in thoſe days of deſpotiſm. They voted a ſecond Addreſs. They again ſtood before the Throne, as the guardians of your franchiſes, and with all the pomp and ſolemnity with which it is their right, as your Repreſentatives, to approach the ſupreme Magiſtrate. But, inſtead of favour and countenance, they met with indignities that could admit of no aggravation, but from their having been offered to the Commons of England in the Palace of a Prince of the Houſe of Brunſwick. They were inſulted in the very antichamber of the King, where none but the officers and retainers of the Court could gain admittance; and when they had paſſed through theſe inſulting placemen, and reached the Throne, their prayer was again rejected with additional contempt. Inſtead of the grave, dignified, and ſolemn language, befitting an occaſion that is likely to be deciſive of your liberties, they found themſelves inſulted by the pert and petulant cavils of a pedantic ſchool-boy diſputing on a point of ſophiſtry. I refer you to the anſwer itſelf. It is completely in the ſpirit of the Miniſter who framed it; and I need not add, that it is completely deſtructive of your deareſt rights. It ſhows you, that the only weapon left you, for your defence againſt the encroachments of the prerogative, is proved to be ineffectual; that the interference of your Repreſentatives, in the ſupport of your intereſts, only expoſes them to ſcorn and contempt; that they have no longer the leaſt power of controul over the Miniſters of the Crown, however pernicious they may judge their Councils to be to your freedom, and that thoſe Miniſters have ceaſed to be reſponſible to them for any meaſures they may chuſe to adopt. To be reſponſible to another perſon for our conduct, ſuppoſes a power in that perſon to call us to account,

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and to correct every abuſe of the truſt repoſed in us! But it is now made appear, that your Repreſentatives have loſt that power over the Miniſters of the Crown, or at leaſt that they cannot uſe it without riſking the exiſtence of the nation, and pulling down all the pillars on which the general ſafety reſts.

That the Commons of England were jealous and miſtruſtful of the executive officers employed by the Crown, was ample reaſon for the removal of thoſe officers even in the moſt unſettled periods of our conſtitution. Never, till this day, was it thought neceſſary to urge any ſpecific charge of criminal or illegal conduct previous to the People's obtaining ſatisfaction on this head, and having their fears and jealouſies quieted. It was charge ſufficient that they had not the confidence of the Repreſentatives of the People, and that theſe Repreſentatives did not think themſelves warranted to repoſe that truſt in them, which, as guardians of the People's right, they could only place in men who they believed in their hearts and conſciences would not uſe it to the detriment of the People.

In proportion as every monarch reſpected the freedom and happineſs of his ſubjects, he reverenced thoſe maxims and paid a gracious and condeſcending deference to this ſcrupulous jealouſy; a jealouſy which he knew was interwoven in the conſtitution of his government, and originated in the ſpirit of the nation over which he reigned. So early as the days of Henry the Fourth, the Commons applied to him for the removal of ſome of his Miniſters, in whom they declared they could not confide. What was his anſwer? "I know of no crimes my Miniſters have committed; but it is enough for me that my Commons deſire their removal; I will therefore diſmiſs them my ſervice."

This was ſpoken in the true ſpirit of a Britiſh King; and if you ſearch every page of the annals of your country, you will not find a ſingle inſtance of a King's acting from a different

ferent ſpirit, and puſhing the exerciſe of his prerogative in the appointment of his Miniſters to the extreme of its right, and in oppoſition to the Commons, whole reign was not as calamitous to himſelf as to his People. With what melancholy forebodings, therefore, muſt not every well wiſher to the public happineſs and tranquility, ſee the ſpirit that prevails in our days!

When your Repreſentatives approach their Sovereign, as the Repreſentatives of the People approached Henry the Fourth for the removal of Miniſters in whom they could not confide, they are told, "This want "of confidence cannot, muſt not come into competition "with the rights of the *Prerogative*. You muſt bring a "*ſpecific charge* on which Miniſters can be *legally convicted*, "or they ſhall not be removed." The predeceſſors of the Tudors and the Stuarts think the *diſapprobation* of the Commons of England a ſufficient reaſon in itſelf for diſmiſſing their ſervants;—In the reign of a Prince who holds his Crown under the terms of the Bill of Rights and the Act of Settlement, the Commons of England are aſked "What "*crimes* have Miniſters committed*? Your jealouſies and "your ſuſpicions, and your want of confidence are not "reaſons with the *Prerogative* for removing them."

How then does the preſent queſtion ſtand? The circumſtances of the country render it impoſſible, without hazarding every thing, to withhold the Supplies—To impeach would be nugatory, and could only tend to increaſe the triumph of the evil adviſers of the Crown, who are chiefly indebted for their power to the ſupport of the Lords—To adviſe or addreſs the Throne for the removal of its Miniſters, is held to be an unwarrantable interference with the

* It is curious to ſee how far this doctrine would be puſhed. Should the Commons ſpecify any *charge*, the anſwer would be, *aſſertion* is not *proof*; let them be *legally convicted*. Who are to be the judges? The Houſe of Lords! What a mockery!

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prerogative ; and the want of confidence in the popular branch of the Legiſlature is declared to be no impediment to Miniſters in conducting the buſineſs of Government.—What ſecurity then have you left, that you ſhall enjoy your freedom for a day ? Who are to protect you againſt the encroaching ſpirit of deſpotiſm ? What barrier have you left to oppoſe to it ? In what do you differ from the ſubjects of the moſt arbitrary monarch in Europe ? To what purpoſe will your Repreſentatives continue to aſſemble together, except to regiſter the arbitrary mandates of the Court,—ſtript and deprived of all means either of controul or advice, to aſſert their original dignity and importance, or defend your franchiſes ?

France had once her Parliament, as free and as independent as yours. France ſtill has her Parliament ; but its freedom and independence have long been trampled under foot. She neglected to reſiſt the firſt encroachments of tyranny, till it burſt upon her in an irreſiſtable tide, and ſhe was overwhelmed in the moſt abject ſlavery. What is there now called he Parliament, is not even the ſhadow of what that body once was. It is an aſſembly of lawyers, who purchaſe their places at the diſcretion of the Crown, and whoſe only pride is to hold the Courts of Juſtice, and regiſter the Edicts of the Prince, as a neceſſary form to thoſe Edicts paſſing into law, but which they have no power to refuſe. In ſome of the provinces, indeed, we ſtill ſee the ſhadow of their ancient Parliaments, in what they call their States General. They have the Sovereign in the perſon of his deputy, as is the caſe in Ireland ;—they have the Nobles appearing in perſon, and they have the Repreſentatives of the People, freely choſen by themſelves. But what are the privileges of this mockery of Parliament ? To receive the commands of the Sovereign from the mouth of his deputy. To be informed of his calls upon the public purſe for the ſervices of his Government, and to contribute larger ſupplies than any other part of

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the kingdom, becauſe, forſooth, they only grant them with their own conſent. Should they withhold them, they are laid under contribution, and the bayonet and the ſword ſhow them how far they are free.

It remains for me to conſider the fourth queſtion, and, after what has been laid before you, it requires no long diſcuſſion.

The propriety of my ſtatement of that queſtion is involved in the reaſoning upon the facts that have already been ſubmitted to you. If you are willing that the innovations attempted by the preſent Miniſters of the Cabal ſhould be eſtabliſhed into precedent; if you are prepared to ſupport thoſe Miniſters againſt the Houſe of Commons, and by that means to ſacrifice the privileges of your own branch of the legiſlature to the Prerogative, you doubtleſs muſt be prepared to relinquiſh "the active ſhare you have "enjoyed through your Repreſentatives in the legiſlature "of your country, and to transfer the government from "King, Lords, and Commons, to King and Lords only."

But the truth is, you are not left to mere reaſoning or ſpeculation on the ſubject. The Miniſter and his friends, in this, as well as in every other conſtitutional queſtion, have thrown aſide all diſguiſe. They have boldly profeſſed their doctrines, and they have as boldly attempted to reduce them to practice.

The excluſive management of the public purſe is the moſt important and ſacred right reſerved to your Repreſentatives.——The moment you allow, that either the Crown or the Lords can interfere in the exerciſe of this right, ſo as to controul and render it nugatory, there is not a man, however looſe and undetermined his ideas of public freedom may be, who will not admit that the power of the Commons is at an end. Yet this the preſent Houſe of Lords have attempted to do, and for this attempt, among others, you have been called upon to expreſs your reliance on that Houſe for the preſervation of your rights!

The East India Company had applied to the Commons for a very capital ſum, to anſwer bills drawn upon them from abroad. At the very time of their making this application, they were before Parliament convicted of the higheſt delinquency. The moſt incontrovertible proofs had been produced of their being on the verge of Bankruptcy, and, without the moſt vigorous interference of the legiſlature, no proſpect could appear of any ſecurity for the enormous ſums already advanced to them from the Treaſury. At the head of this Treaſury, and veſted with the diſcretionary management thereof, had been juſt placed a ſet of Commiſſioners, who had made common cauſe with thoſe delinquents, and who had openly undertaken their exculpation and defence. I aſk you, if under thoſe circumſtances, your Repreſentatives would not have been traitors to their own conviction, and to the duty they owe to you, whoſe money was thus to be diſpoſed of, if they had not interfered as they did with the authority you had delegated to them, and ordered that no ſums ſhould be advanced for ſuch purpoſes, without the conſent of the Houſe of Commons? But what was the conduct of thoſe new defenders of the People's rights?—their *hereditary Repreſentatives*, on this occaſion? One of their members, and he too profeſſing himſelf a whig to the very extreme of whiggiſm, and once ſuppoſed to have fallen a martyr to his popular zeal, procured a vote of cenſure on the Commons for this interference. He did not ſtop even there. He made the cenſure general, and declared all ſimilar interference an *uſurpation* on the part of the Commons, and an undue and unwarranted exerciſe of their powers. Your Repreſentatives, indeed, took care as far as depended on them, to vindicate your cauſe on this moſt eſſential point. One of the great deſigns of the Cabal in procuring this cenſure, was to breed a quarrel between the two Houſes, and thereby have ſome plauſible pretext for diſſolving Parliament. But the Houſe of Commons avoided the ſnare. They avoided all retort

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upon the other branch of the legiſlature. They were content to prove, by numberleſs preſidents, extracted from their own Journals, that they had only exerciſed a right invariably reſorted to by the Commons on all ſimilar occaſions, and to theſe precedents they added a Reſolution of their own, aſſerting the privilege for themſelves and their ſucceſſors, of exerciſing that right without limit or controul. But whether that Reſolution is to remain a dead letter, unoperative and ineffectual, like all the other votes and Reſolutions of your Repreſentatives in the preſent ſtruggle, is a queſtion that muſt finally be determined by you.

Of ſimilar tendency to this vote of the Houſe of Lords, was the doctrine advanced by the Miniſter and his friends in the Houſe of Commons reſpecting the Mutiny Bill. Among the ſeveral conſtitutional expedients to which your Repreſentatives could have recourſe for the purpoſe of removing an Adminiſtration in whom they could not confide, mention had been made of paſſing a ſhort Mutiny Bill. This had been done but the very year before for the expreſs purpoſe of procuring the removal of the then Miniſters from his Majeſty's Councils. There was not a man, even ſo late as that period, who dared deny the right of the Commons to adopt ſuch a meaſure, much leſs to threaten your Repreſentatives with the conduct of the other Houſe, on a ſuppoſition that they ſhould adopt it. Things were not then ripe for bringing the great queſtion between you and the Crown to a final deciſion. At preſent your ſuppoſed approbation encourages the Cabal to conclude, that the time is now come, and they availed themſelves of it. Without the leaſt reſerve or palliation, their Miniſter gave the Houſe to underſtand, that if they ſhould ſhorten the period of the Mutiny Bill, the Houſe of Lords would alter it to the wiſhes of the Adminiſtration, and he left it to them to reflect on the conſequences. You need not be told that the Mutiny Bill is a *Money Bill*. That it includes in its object the pay and

regulation of the army; in other words, that it is a Bill that affects the very vitals of your freedom.

With theſe doctrines declared and eſtabliſhed, and reduced to practice, can any of you entertain a doubt of the reſolution that is formed by the preſent Cabal Miniſters to ſhow the world that the government of the country can be conducted in oppoſition to the Commons of England; that the Crown and the Houſe of Lords, or to ſpeak more properly, the Crown in the Houſe of Lords, poſſeſſes ample powers for eſtabliſhing every act of policy and revenue, and that the conſent of your branch of the legiſlature is only a matter of form, which by tampering with the corrupt and venal, impoſing on the credulous and weak, defaming, oppreſſing, and tiring out the independent Members, they are ſure to obtain, until at length the practice is fully eſtabliſhed, and this conſent, by degrees, becomes a matter of courſe.

Where then, let me aſk you, are you to look for your ſecurity? Can it be poſſible ſo far to impoſe upon your underſtandings, as to make you think that by ſacrificing your Repreſentatives to the Lords, you are protecting your own rights? Is it in infatuation itſelf to ſuppoſe that you have leſs to expect from men who owe all their conſequence and power to you; who have the ſame intereſt with you; who, indeed, are part of yourſelves, and in a political light, are no otherwiſe diſtinguiſhed from you but by your own free choice, than from perſons totally unconnected with you, appointed by another power, and looking for all their authority and conſequence to another quarter?

In all conteſts between you and the arbitrary encroachments of the Crown, to what ſide will thoſe Lords, who now are ſaid to be your only protectors, lean? To whom do they owe their titles and dignities? From whom do they expect the means of ſupporting thoſe titles and dignities, when by misfortunes or extravagance they conſume their patrimonies? Who can encreaſe their numbers to any extent that may be neceſſary for oppoſing thoſe amongſt them who prefer perſonal ho-

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nour and integrity, the pride of hereditary virtue, and the intereſt and freedom of their native country to the ſmiles of evil Miniſters, or the favour of an ambitious uſurping Prince.

With ſuch Miniſters we are actually viſited. A day may come when we may be ſcourged by ſuch a Prince. Your Repreſentatives are deprived of all the powers hitherto enjoyed by them of protecting you from their deſigns. This is declared to be done with your own approbation; and your Addreſſes are pleaded in juſtification of the Miniſter who firſt dared to execute the bold project of depriving you of thoſe powers. It is time, therefore, to come forth in your own defence. It is time to convince the world that you have been defamed and traduced by the creatures of Adminiſtration, who would brand you, in the eyes of mankind, as the moſt contemptible of human beings, and the baſe betrayers of your own rights; as a depraved, degenerate, unnatural race of men, who, in the actual, full, and acknowledged poſſeſſion of the rights and privileges which your anceſtors thought to be cheaply purchaſed and ſecured for you with their blood, make a *voluntary* ſurrender of them into the hands of that power from which they fought to protect you, and who thank and applaud the Miniſter, who, at the age of twenty-five, has dared to make himſelf the inſtrument in the point of enſlaving you.

A FREEHOLDER.

A LIKENESS.